



Thomas Goodwin
(1600-1679)

“The greatest pulpit exegete of Paul that has ever lived.”

--J. I. Packer



Westminster Assembly







THE WORKS
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THOMAS
GOODWIN

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Exposition of
Ephesians 1

THE WORKS
OF
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VOL. 2

Exposition of
Ephesians 2

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of Election
A Discourse
of Thank-
fulness

THE WORKS
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VOL. 10

An
Unregenerate
Man's
Guiltiness
before God,
in Respect of
Sin and
Punishment

And I will here say with simple truth that his works have never been out of my hands down to this day. In those far-off years I read my Goodwin every Sabbath morning and every Sabbath night. Goodwin was my every Sabbath-day meat and my every Sabbath-day drink.

And during my succeeding years as a student, and as a young minister, I carried about a volume of Goodwin wherever I went. I read him in railway carriages and on steamboats. I read him at home and abroad. I read him on my holidays among the Scottish Grampians and among the Swiss Alps.

I carried his volumes about with me till they fell out of their original cloth binding, and till I got my book-binder to put them into his best morocco. I have read no other author so much and so often. And I continue to read him till this day as if I had never read him before.

Alexander Whyte

They are five invaluable volumes.

Andrew Bonar



(14)
THE
RETURNE
OF
PRAYERS.

A Treatise,
VVHEREIN THIS CASE

[How to discern Gods Answers to our Prayers]

is briefly resolved :

WITH
Other Observations upon *Psalm 85.8.*
concerning Gods speaking Peace, &c.

By THO: GOODWIN, B.D.

HAB. 2. 1.

I will watch to see what he will say to me.

L O N D O N,
Printed by M. F. for R. Dawlman. 1643.





Yet many who are true investors in prayer neglect to watch for the return of answers. When the voyage of their prayers proves long, they grow discouraged, as though their ships were lost at sea.

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FINIS.

THE



THE RETVRNE OF PRAYERS.

PSAL. 85. 8.

*I will heare what God the Lord will speake : for He wil
speake peace unto His people, and to his Saints : but let
them not turne againe to folly.*

The Coherence of the words.



His PSALME was penned, in
the name and for the comfort of
the whole Church of the Jews,
both as a Prophecy of, and a
Prayer for their returne out of
the Babylonish Captivity, and
the flowing in againe of that
ancient glory, peace, administra-
tion of Justice, liberty of Gods Ordinances, plenty
and increase, which formerly they enjoyed, but had

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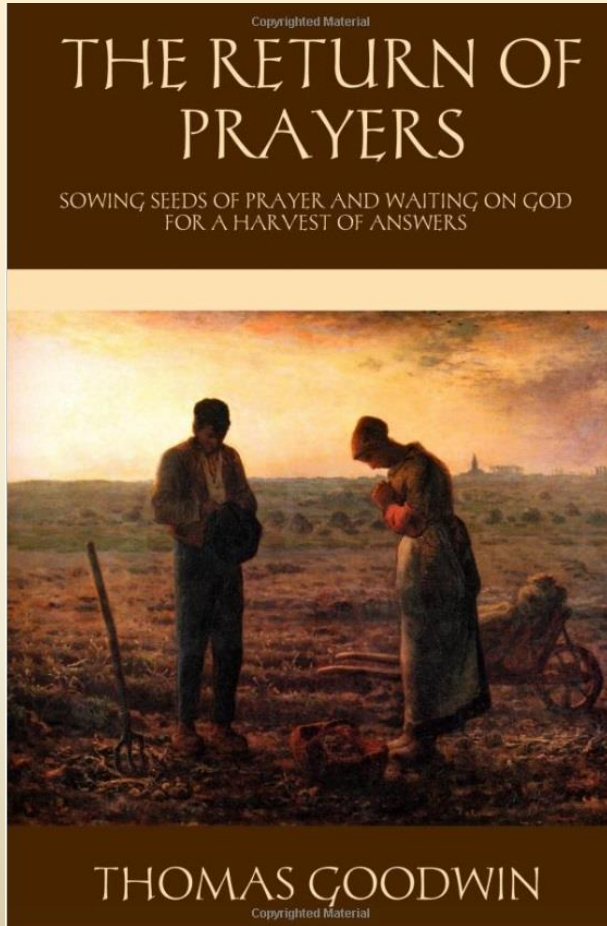
THE RETURN OF PRAYERS

SOWING SEEDS OF PRAYER AND WAITING ON GOD
FOR A HARVEST OF ANSWERS



THOMAS GOODWIN

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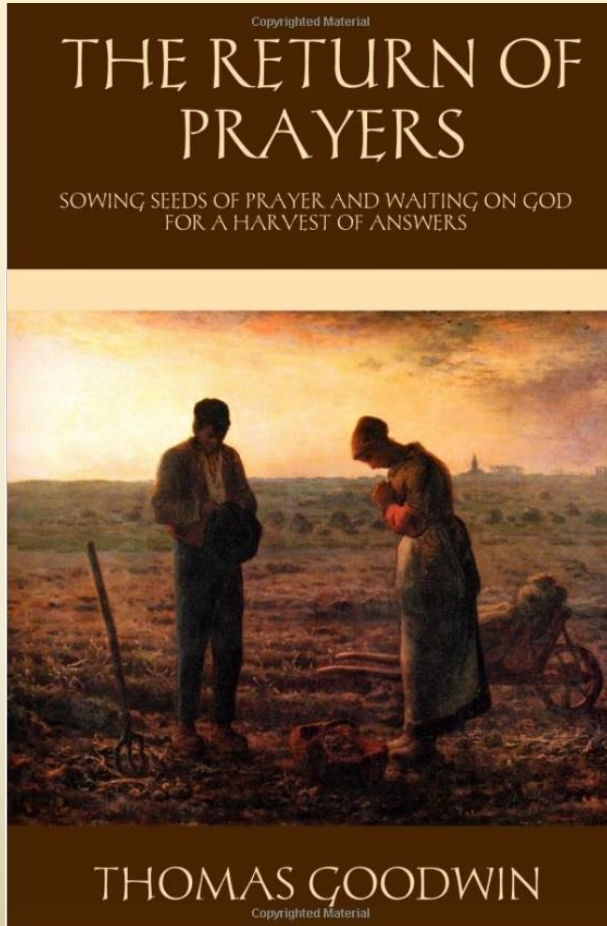


Psalm 85:8

**I will hear what
God the LORD will
say. . .**



*His prayer being finished,
and he having spoke, he
now stands and listens, as
you do when you expect an
echo. . .*



***The main observation
and subject of this
discourse . . . That
God's people are
diligently to observe
the answers to their
prayers.***

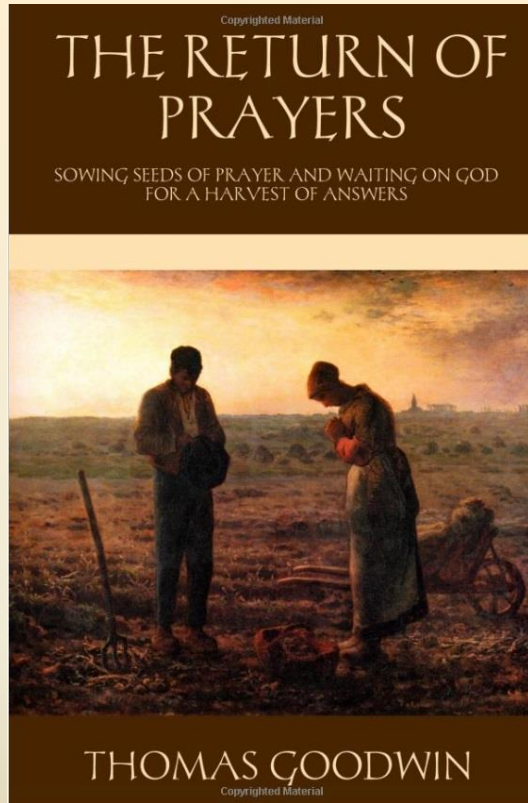
I will hear. . .

Let me hear. . . (*ESV*)

I will hear. . .

Let me hear. . . (*ESV*)

“Cohortative” verb



**(1) So that we do not
take God's ordinance
in vain.**



If we use any means, and expect not the end, it is a sign we think the means vain to accomplish the end.



If we use any means, and expect not the end, it is a sign we think the means vain to accomplish the end.

What profit have we if we pray?

Job 21:15



*At the beginning of your
supplications the
command was issued, and
I have come to tell you. . .*

Daniel 9:23



*This is the confidence
which we have before Him,
that, if we ask anything
according to His will, He
hears us.*

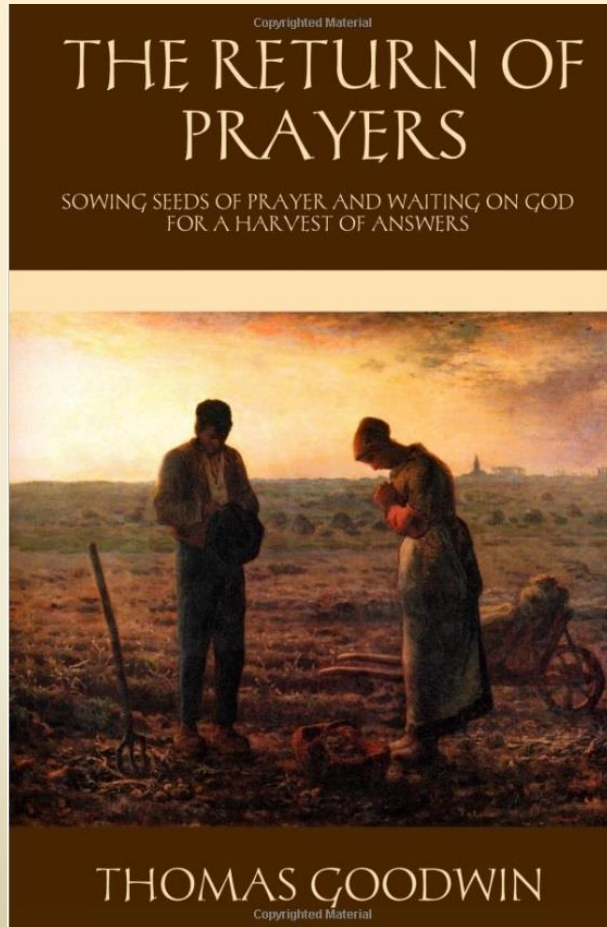
Psalm 66:19

But certainly God has heard;

Psalm 66:19

But certainly God has heard;

**He has given heed to the voice of
my prayer.**



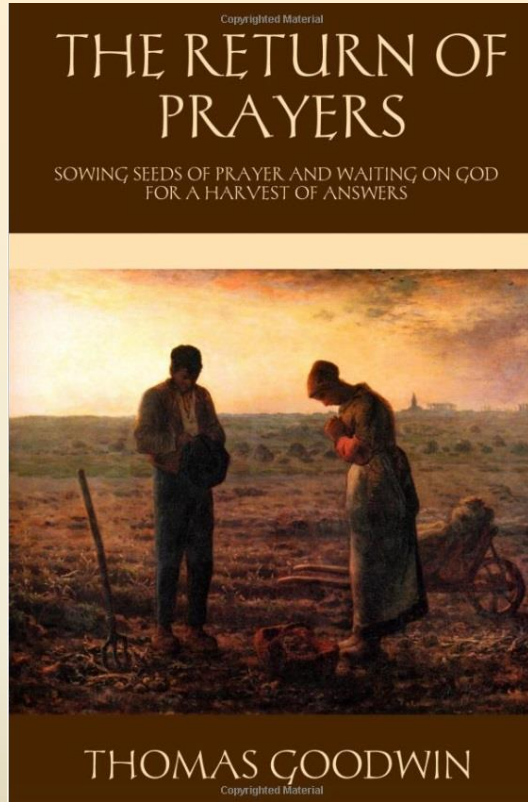
Micah 7:8

**But as for me, I will
watch expectantly for
the LORD; I will wait
for the God of my
salvation. My God will
hear me.**



And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

I John 5:14-15



**(2) So that we do not
take God's attributes
in vain.**

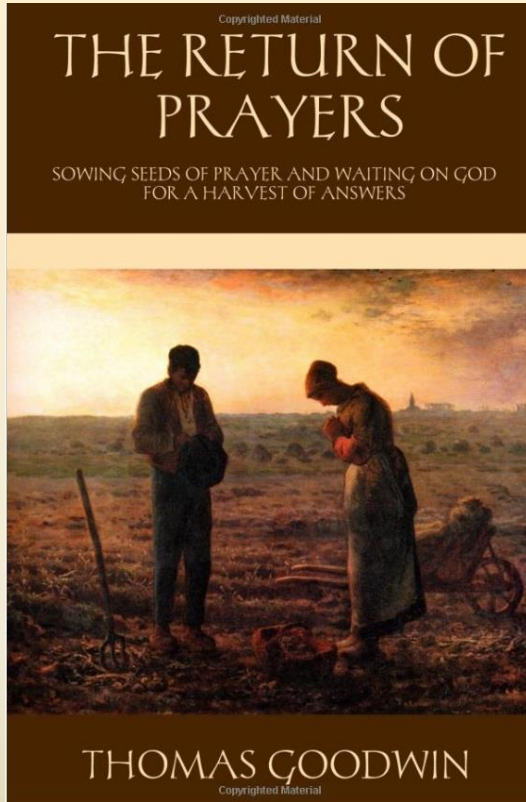


By neglecting to look for answers, we make an idol god of Him, as if He has ears but hears not or eyes but sees not. In this way we rob Him of one of his royal titles, “a God that heareth prayers.” Ps. 65:2



And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night. . .

I Kings 8:59



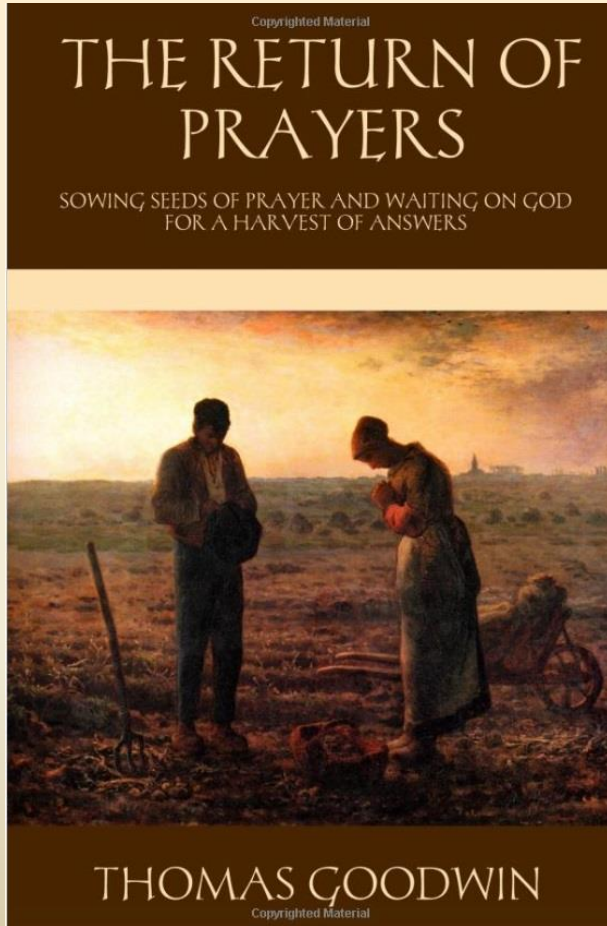
**(3) So that God's
answers will not be
sent in vain.**



*Not a word of His answers
should be allowed to fall to
the ground by our failing to
catch them when they
come. Solomon could say,*

*“There hath not failed one word of all his
good promise.”*

I Kings 8:56

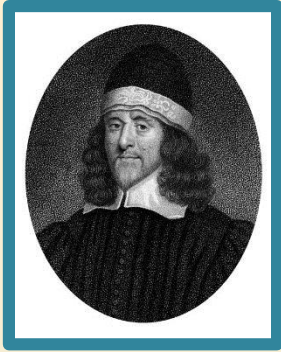


Psalm 85:8

**I will hear what
God the LORD will
say. . .**

**(4) So that God will not be provoked
to cease from answering**

**(5) So that we will have reasons to
return thanks**



The reason that we pray so much and give thanks so little is that we do not observe God's answers when they come. We do not study them.

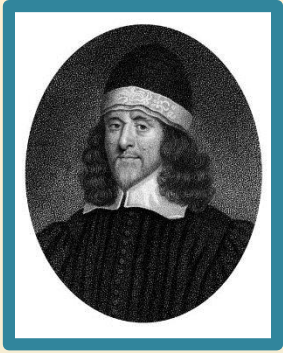
(6) So that we do not miss certain experiences

David recalled an experience of having his prayers answered and cited it as a reason to continue calling on the Lord, “Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live” (Psalm 116:2).

Such as the experience of new insight into our own hearts and ways. If God does not grant your prayers, it will cause you to seek the reason He does not answer. David discovered, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Psalm 66:18).

(7) So that we do not lose our comfort

You are to “ask, and . . . receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24). By this means, even the smallest things which we enjoy or use become sources of comfort if they were obtained by prayer.



When we hear even a line or two from a close friend about even a small matter it cheers our hearts. So when we hear anything, be it ever so small, from God in answer to our prayers. But this joy we will forfeit if we do not observe the answers.



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3 By thankfulness for the accomplishment.

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